

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please replace the pending claims with the following claim listing:

1-12. **(Cancelled)**

13. **(Previously Presented)** A method of sterilising a sealed enclosure comprising continuously recirculating a gas through the enclosure and through a preparation region for a period of time; and

dispensing a mixture of decontaminant gas and water vapour into the recirculating gas in the preparation region to flow therewith through the enclosure to reach a concentration in the enclosure above the dew point of the gas and water vapour mixture for the ambient temperature in the chamber and thereby to condense onto surfaces in the enclosure to sterilise such surfaces;

wherein the gas temperature in or exiting the enclosure or entering the preparation region, decontaminant gas concentration in or exiting the enclosure or entering the preparation region and condensation of the decontaminant gas on the surfaces of the enclosure are measured and the dispensing of the mixture of decontaminant gas and water vapour into the gas in the preparation region is controlled in response to the levels determined by said measuring to provide a requisite level of condensation of the decontaminant gas/water vapour in the enclosure.

14. **(Previously Presented)** A method of sterilising a sealed enclosure as claimed in claim 13, wherein the gas circulated through the enclosure is air.

15. **(Previously Presented)** A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the gas is filtered in said preparation region prior to circulation through the enclosure.

16. **(Previously Presented)** A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the gas is filtered in said preparation region prior to circulation through the enclosure.

17. **(Previously Presented)** A method of sterilising a sealed enclosure as claimed in claim 13, wherein means are provided for monitoring the gas pressure in the enclosure and means are provided for adjusting the gas pressure therein by controlling the supply of gas circulating through the enclosure.

18. **(Previously Presented)** A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein after a sufficient amount of decontaminant gas has been condensed in the chamber to achieve decontamination, supply of the decontaminant gas and water vapour mixture to the preparation region is terminated and the decontaminant gas is removed from the sealed enclosure.

19. **(Previously Presented)** A method of sterilising a sealed enclosure as claimed in claim 18, wherein the method of moving the decontaminant gas from the sealed enclosure comprises:

passing clean filtered gas through the enclosure and releasing the gas exiting the enclosure to atmosphere; or

circulating the gas exiting the enclosure through an auxiliary circuit containing a catalytic decomposition device or absorption device for the decontaminant gas to remove the decontaminant gas.

20. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus for sterilising a sealed enclosure comprising :
means (8) for continuously recirculating a gas through a preparation region (3) and through the enclosure (1) for a period of time; and

means (10) in the preparation region for dispensing a mixture of decontaminant gas and water vapour mixture into the recirculating gas to flow therewith through the enclosure to reach a concentration in the enclosure above the dew point for the ambient temperature in the chamber and thereby to condense onto surfaces in the enclosure to sterilise such surfaces,

wherein means (15) are provided for measuring gas temperature in or exiting the enclosure or entering the preparation region, means (17, 18) are provided for measuring the condensation of the decontaminant gas on the surfaces of the enclosure and means (19) are provided for controlling the dispensing of the mixture of decontaminant gas and water vapour into the gas in the preparation region in response to the levels determined by said measuring

to provide a predetermined level of condensation of the mixture of decontaminant gas and water vapour in the enclosure.

21. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising means for circulating air through the preparation region and enclosure to convey the decontaminant gas/water vapour mixture to the enclosure.

22. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising means for filtering the gas in said preparation region prior to circulation through the enclosure.

23. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising: means for monitoring the gas pressure in the enclosure; and means for adjusting the gas pressure therein by controlling the supply of gas circulating through the enclosure.

24. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the control means are arranged to terminate supply of the decontaminant gas and water vapour mixture in the preparation region after a sufficient amount of decontaminant gas has condensed in the enclosure to achieve decontamination and for removing the decontaminant gas from the enclosure.

25. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein the means for removing the decontaminant gas from the sealed enclosure comprises means for passing clean filtered gas through the enclosure and releasing the gas exiting the enclosure to atmosphere, or means for circulating the gas exiting the enclosure through an auxiliary circuit containing a catalytic decomposition device or absorption device for the decontaminant gas to remove the decontaminant gas.

26. **(Previously Presented)** A method of sterilising a sealed enclosure as claimed in claim 13, further comprising heating the gas in said preparation region prior to circulation through the enclosure.

27. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising means for heating the gas in said preparation region prior to circulation through the enclosure.

28. **(Previously Presented)** A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the condensation of the decontaminant gas on the surfaces of the enclosure is measured by a condensation sensor at least partially disposed within the enclosure.

29. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the means for measuring the condensation of the decontaminant gas on the surfaces of the enclosure comprises a condensation sensor at least partially disposed within the enclosure.